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AN

ADDRESS

FROM A

COUNTRY MINISTER TO HIS PARISHIONERS,

ON THE

SUBJECT

OF THE

COW-POX,

OR

*VACCINE INOCULATION.*

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FORDSHIRE.

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1803.

# ROYAL JENNERIAN SOCIETY

FOR THE

## EXTERMINATION

OF THE

## S M A L L - P O X,

HOUSE OF THE INSTITUTION, NO. 14, SALISBURY-SQUARE, FLEET-STREET.

AT A BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

THAT the handsome offer made by the Rev. THOMAS ALSTON WARREN to this Society, of the Right to print his very able and useful publication, entitled, "An Address from a Country Minister to his Parishioners, on the Subject of the Cow-Pox, or Vaccine Inoculation," be accepted.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

THAT the Thanks of this Board be given to the Rev. THOMAS ALSTON WARREN, for his permission to print his publication for the use of this Society.






## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IN an endeavour to promote a parochial Vaccine Inoculation, the Author of the following short Address found some prejudices existed, which he deemed it his duty to counteract; and strongly impressed with the incalculable advantages of the new practice, he drew up in much haste a familiar recommendation of it, which he originally designed for the perusal of his parishioners only; but having been advised to publish it in a cheap form, he has resolved to do so, hoping that its circulation may prove useful.

Kensworth, Herts,  
*Feb. 3, 1803.*



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GOOD NEIGHBOURS,

IT has pleased 'Almighty Providence, that a discovery should be lately made of the highest consequence to mankind; and as it may very materially affect you and your families, I shall state to you my sentiments respecting it, in as short and plain a manner as I possibly can.

About four or five years since, an eminent physician, Dr. JENNER, published to the world a method he had just before found out,

to prevent people from taking that dreadful disease, the Small-pox; and this was by inoculating them with another disease, infinitely more safe and mild, called the Cow-pox. Now this latter complaint had been long known in Gloucestershire, and some other parts of England, and been in these considered as a security against the Small-pox, but it never before had been spread by Inoculation. The statement of Dr. JENNER was so curious, that medical men directly began to make experiments which might prove, whether the discovery were really useful, and every day more and more confirmed the following facts: namely, that the Cow-pox was a disorder which certainly secured those to whom it was given from the Small-pox;—that it was not in the least infectious, since it could be spread only by Inoculation;—that no preparation was necessary before the disease was communicated, and no medicine during its progress;—that it affected the constitution so little, generally speaking, that persons under the complaint might follow their daily business just as well as if they were in perfect health;—and that in no one instance had it proved fatal. All this was not believed without the strongest, and fullest evidence—hundreds, nay thousands, after having had the Cow-pox, were inoculated with small-pox matter, and exposed in other ways to small-pox infection,

fection, but in vain—No one instance occurred where the Small-pox was caught after the constitution had been clearly affected by the Cow-pox.

The infinite importance of the discovery became now obvious. Many of the first physicians and surgeons, who of course best understood the subject, inoculated their own families; many children of the first nobility likewise had the Cow-pox; and uniform success attended it; infants under a month old, women far advanced in pregnancy, men who had come to threescore years and ten, all alike had the disease in the mildest manner; no confinement was necessary, no infection was spread, no danger incurred. It next began to be introduced into public hospitals;—the famous Small-pox Hospital near London gave up, in time, Inoculation after the former method, and made use of the Cow-pox matter only—Dispensaries and Infirmaries throughout England followed the example; so did the Surgeons in the Navy and Army; and it was proved, that our brave Seamen and Soldiers could successfully ply the ropes, direct the cannon, and handle the musket, whilst undergoing this new Inoculation. Our enemies did not like this at all; but when the war was happily over, they were wise enough to imitate our example. The  
new,



new, or Vaccine Inoculation, has been introduced into France, and experiments have been made there on a very large scale, all of which tended to confirm its superiority. In Italy likewise, and Spain, it has been practised, as it has in Turkey, in the West Indies, and in the northern parts of Europe; and it is a delightful reflection, that in hot and cold climates it succeeds equally well. No doubt remains that it will, by the blessing of heaven, spread throughout the globe, and in time utterly destroy that loathsome and dreadful disease, the Small-pox, which has always been justly considered as a scourge, inferior only to the plague.

No material discovery however has yet been made to the world, without having some prejudices to encounter, and some opposition to overcome; even Christianity, that best gift of Heaven, was not established without much controversy; and there have been some objections made to the Cow-pox, or Vaccine Inoculation, which it may be proper just to notice.

Some people there are, who object to Inoculation altogether, thinking it sinful and presumptuous willingly to incur a disease:—now this is a very old prejudice, having prevailed more or less for nearly a hundred

hundred years, that is, ever since Inoculation was first introduced into England.— In considering it, remember, that the care of health is a moral, nay more, a religious duty. We cannot be comfortable in ourselves, or serviceable to society, or useful to our families, when under the infliction of disease. Now God, who allows so many sicknesses to prevail, has given reason to man, and medicine to heal these sicknesses.—He has mercifully created herbs, and many other things, which possess counteracting and healthy properties; and if, by a certain slight operation, we can secure ourselves from the danger of a loathsome, and frequently mortal disease, so far from this being impious, it even becomes a duty. You do not think it impious, I suppose, to take proper medicines when you are sick; or to have a finger or hand, which has mortified, cut off, to prevent the disease from spreading and quickly destroying you. In these cases you do not leave all to Providence, justly considering that means are afforded you to remedy such evils, and reason given you to apply those means; and surely it is equally allowable, and equally wise, to prevent a disease from attacking you, as it is to cure it when it does prevail; and the same reasoning holds, when a small complaint may be encountered, to insure  
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escape

escape from many distressing fears, and a very great danger.

Others object to the Vaccine Inoculation, because the complaint came originally from the cow. Now, Neighbours, consider if this be not very ridiculous. In the first place, what animal is more clean in its own food, or affords more healthy food to man, than the cow? We drink its milk, we eat its flesh; and if Providence have mercifully ordained that we should, through its means, secure ourselves from a loathsome disease, shall we in this latter instance only object to it? Did the means of security arise from the most unclean animal, the objection to their use upon this account would, after a certain number of experiments, be idle.—We have in the present instance all possible certainty, that no other disease incident to the animal, is communicated with the matter, even when it comes directly from the cow. I myself have seen persons advanced in life, who had the Cow-pox in their early years, and had since been subject to no other complaints than such as form the common lot of humanity. Many persons there are living, who had this disorder forty or fifty years ago, taking it directly from the cow, and have found no other effects from it, than a most comfortable



able and useful security through life against the danger of the noisome Small-pox. There are some of our medicines derived from animals, but these we do not on that account object to; they do us good, and we care nothing about their origin—if, therefore, the Cow-pox be a blessing, why should we refuse to benefit by it, because that likewise comes from an animal? This objection about the poor harmless cow can, I think, want no further answer; but if it did, remember, that we know nothing about the origin of other diseases; for aught we can prove, they might all, in the first instance, have come from some animal, or other. There are writers who say, that the Small-pox was originally communicated by an animal, called the camel; however that be, we only know and feel, that the Almighty, doubtless for wise reasons, permits disease to rage in various forms; and we should be highly grateful, when the means of prevention or cure, are in any instance pointed out to us.

Some, however, I have met with, who grant the mildness of the Vaccine Inoculation, and would willingly admit all its other blessings, but doubt its security. They have fears that it is not, as they say, the right sort; and some few stories have been told of persons inoculated for the

Cow-pox, who afterwards caught the Small-pox.—Neighbours, depend upon it, that these stories are in some degree, or altogether, untrue. There is no human subject, on which the evidence is so full and conclusive as on this ; none on which so many experiments have been made with such uniform and complete success. If a thousand instances are not enough to prove, that Small-pox matter would not take, after the constitution had been affected by the Cow-pox, why ten thousand may be brought forward. The origin of these stories is probably this: though the Cow-pox is full as likely to take by inoculation, under proper management, as the Small-pox, it occasionally happens, that in the first instance, the arm does not become inflamed, nor the constitution affected. In such, certainly, no security is gained ; unless the inoculation be repeated and attended with success, the Small-pox may afterwards be caught. How many persons inoculated for the Small-pox have afterwards, through the matter not affecting the constitution, taken it in the natural way? I faithfully assure you, that as far as my information goes, no well confirmed instance has occurred in which, after the Inoculation for the Cow-pox has been complete, the Small-pox has been taken ; but if there were a few such, it is a well known fact, that the Small-pox sometimes  
affects

affects the same person twice. Medical men know this—Nurses in the habit of attending those affected with this dreadful complaint, well know it likewise.

Such is the history of, and such the few easily answered objections to, a practice which is now more and more spreading through our own island, and through the world. Societies are now benevolently formed for the more general propagation of the Cow-pox—our most religious and gracious KING and QUEEN, (whom all their subjects ought alike to love and reverence) patronize one of these.—The Heir Apparent to the throne, and almost the whole of the Royal Family are members of it, as are many of the first nobility, and nearly all the most eminent Physicians, and Surgeons in our land. And what, think you, could make all these great and skilful men so desirous of promoting the Cow-pox, except a conviction that it would advance the general good? They doubtless think the Vaccine Inoculation, as I certainly do, one of the greatest mercies, exclusive of the blessings of Religion, ever offered to man.

A few words more on the advantages of the Vaccine Inoculation, and I have done. It is calculated that in and near London alone, three thousand die yearly by the Small-pox—thousands more in the country;



country ; every one of whom might, under the new practice, through the blessing of Providence, be saved. I need not mention to you any particular instance of parents suddenly snatched away from their children, or suddenly deprived of them. I need not point out to you widows and orphans, whom that cruel disease the Small-pox has robbed of their greatest earthly blessing. Alas, you see and know too many ! Besides, what distress and alarm does that distemper cause whilst it rages ! The house where it prevails is avoided ; acquaintance and friends are afraid to come near you ; the body is often sorely afflicted ; blindness for a time comes on, and lasting injury is often done to the eyes : and if, after a hard struggle, death is escaped from, the countenance becomes marked and scarred in such a manner, as to change, through life, the appearance of beauty and health into that of ugliness and disease. Now, the manufacturer or the husbandman affected by the Cow-pox, instead of being confined to his house or bed, and shunned by his neighbours, can, generally speaking (for a slight head-ach will now and then come on for a few hours) follow his usual business, earn his usual wages, and attend without inconvenience on the loom, or the plough : his wife can manage her family concerns ; and his children, instead of sitting on the mother's

ther's lap, bloated masses of disease; can pick as usual the wool or the cotton, plait the straw, knit the stocking, or toss about the bobbins of the lace-pillow, only knowing from a little inflammation on the arm, that they have any disease at all; for in infancy and childhood this disease is more particularly mild.—Or they may go safely to school whilst the disorder is upon them, and all may alike regularly attend on divine worship. When too these children grow up and go into the world, the first question asked them, if they offer themselves for service, is, Whether they have had the Small-pox? To that, if secured by the Vaccine Inoculation, they can give a satisfactory answer. Besides, neither they, nor you, after having this complaint, need ever entertain those fears about the Small-pox, which detract so much from the happiness, and hinder so much the business of life. You may safely go at all times, where your concerns lead you; to your neighbours, to markets, to fairs, to church, without caring whether the Small-pox rages, or not, about you. And all this security and comfort are gained, where you pay for inoculation yourselves, by a very small fee, which I trust most of you could for such important benefits well spare, and where it is done by the parish (as in wise and humane imitation of some of our neighbours)

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it now is among us, without any expence to you whatever. Neglect not therefore, I exhort you, both as a Friend and Minister, such proffered blessings. Secure yourselves from danger, preserve your children, and still render most grateful thanks to Almighty God, who has in this instance so providentially permitted to man the means of defence, against “the pestilence that  
 “walked in darkness, and the sickness that  
 “destroyed in the noon-day.”

Such, Neighbours, is the advice of your faithful Friend, and affectionate Minister —.



































































